

Interview with Peter Ahrends by Angela Drinnan on 28th August 2013 for the Anti-Apartheid Movement Archives Committee project Forward to Freedom <http://www.aamarchives.org>

Angela Drinnan: background questions

Peter Ahrends: Yes, I'm Peter Ahrends and I was born on the 30th April 1933 in Berlin in Germany. My father was an architect, as am I, and my mother was a weaver and a weaving instructor at the time of the period of the Bauhaus in Germany and to some extent in Moscow when they went there before I was born. So that's a rough cut background.

AD: And you've answered the other question I was going to ask which was about your own profession

PA: Yes, I'm an architect. So there's that kind of connection with the architectural world from Berlin. I left with my parents, or at least my father left first, in late 1936, and I followed with my mother a few months later, early 1937 when he'd secured some work in South Africa, where he found work and we followed after. So that's a kind of very early position.

AD: And so when did you first become aware of apartheid?

PA: I first became aware of the apartheid question when I was at school in Johannesburg. And when the nationalist government won, came into power, in 1948 I think, and I knew from what was being said to some extent the change that was about to happen. Although my experience as a boy, I arrived at the age of 4 and I left at the age of 18, to come here to London to study and have been here more or less ever since. So it was just part of my childhood going to Johannesburg and in that latter part of my teenage life I became aware of the shift that was taking place with the nationalist government coming into power. When I was age 11, 12 thereabouts.

AD: And how would you describe the political, cultural mood then?

PA: Gosh I was in my early teens, so one that was to me not very evident, wasn't very clear as to what direction was going to be taken and although I came from a family that fled Nazism and therefore fled oppression, fled anti-Semitism, and probable death in my father's case as a Jew, you know these things as a young boy never really came to be analysed in my head at least in the way that one might expect in later adult life. So although there was talk when I was at school about the changes that were happening these were not very apparent to me. I was a school boy, I was at boarding school, most of my time was occupied in the school, so really there wasn't a great consciousness of the shift that was going to happen later on.

AD: And when did that come for you, more of an awareness of that shift?

PA: I suppose in my late teens, perhaps at the age of 16. I finished school a bit early by current standards. I finished when I was 16 and did other things. I knew then that I wanted to be an architect. It was young to go off to University and my father, I think very nicely, suggested that I might like to learn, might like to actually be apprenticed to building contractors as an apprentice to learn the trades to some extent. So to get a feel for the other side of the building process, the real stuff of making things in situ rather than designing them in your head. So I did that for about 18 months, one way or another, apprentice plumber, apprentice carpenter, and that sort of thing, worked under those conditions getting a feel for what was then to be a late teens part of more of the working class. Although of course the working class situation is already quite complex, or was already quite complex in South Africa, because of course the blacks were clearly an impoverished working class. And the

whites were already a step socially above that, so that the situation was more complex than you might expect to find for instance in the UK.

AD: And when did you decide you wanted to become involved in the anti-apartheid movement?

PA: Much later. I came over here at the age of 18, began to make a life for myself, studied architecture here at the Architectural Association in Bedford Square, and was increasingly aware of the situation but was not actively involved in any way with a political movement that in a sense addressed the struggle against apartheid at that stage. This was in the early 1950s. And the situation wasn't very clear to me as to what struggle was going on, certainly in Britain which was still in the aftermath of the Second World War to some extent, and therefore those were the issues that seemed to fill people's minds here at large. So it was only much later.

AD: So what was it that much later pulled you into that more active participation?

PA: Much later in married life, I was already a professional, I had partners, we'd formed a partnership, I met, my wife and I met at a party, we met friends to be, who were ANC members. And Harold Wolpe, and his wife Anne-Marie, Harold Wolpe was one of the escapees and a strong white communist of the period of the Rivonia Trial, and escaped with Rusty Bernstein, also a white South African communist of the time. They escaped, having been imprisoned during the early stages of the apartheid regime. So there were a number of, a good number of, escaped South African ANC members living in London and I began, with my wife Liz, to be part of that, to some extent and became very friendly and very close friends with the Wolpes and therefore met others who were in the field of the struggle through the 1960s, 70s, 80s and so on.

AD: And what was that like to be meeting these people and hearing their experiences?

PA: Great. Great, because you know, what's good about my childhood associations with the world of apartheid you asked about a moment ago, and I think I answered I wasn't very conscious of the shift in detail that was taking place, but what I did have from earlier childhood recollections was a deep discomfort with the racist conditions in which I found myself. I wasn't, this wasn't an analytic response, it wasn't something that as a boy of 7, 8, 9, 10, I was capable of analysing. But it was as a boy of 11 when my parents had just divorced, sent me to a boarding school 800 miles away. I removed myself from the boarding school, ran away, I'll cut this story short, but it's only to focus on the question of one's perception as a young boy of the injustice of racism that I want to mention this at all. I was on the train on an 800 mile journey, because the ticket inspector had found me there without a ticket without money, on the station platform. When the train arrived at Johannesburg the railway police came for me so to speak along with the ticket inspector, very pleasantly, and took me to a little office on the platform. And with a fellow escapee who had joined me in this venture, the two of us were boys who had escaped together, and there's a story as to how we managed all that but I won't go into that. This is really to talk about a particular instance then in the office when the railway police were very pleasantly asking us about our backgrounds, why we'd done what we'd done, where our parents were and all that stuff. And whilst I was answering these questions I heard and partly saw a young black lad who also had been taken in the railway police into an adjacent office where the door was slightly ajar. And I heard in parallel with my own conversation with the railway police and the ticket inspector, I heard what was going on next door because that was a very different scenario. This was before the time of, before apartheid formalised, this was before the nationalist party came in, so this must have been in 1944, 1945 perhaps, towards the end of the Second World War. But there was already of course an ex-colonial condition which separated by race the whites from the blacks and the Asians. And so in this condition, to go back to that little story about

being in that little compartment so to speak, I heard the manner in which that boy, that young black lad, seemed to me about my age, was being questioned, and the aggression, and I would say the verbal violence that was being applied to him was very different from the condition that was being applied to me. And I've never forgotten that. I seldom remembered it for 30 years, but when I came to reflect on it in due course as an adult I realised that for me this was a kind of a turning point. In a way it was more of a turning point than any political party could possibly have been because it was very direct experience which I felt in relation to this parallel scenario that was taking place between a young boy, a young black boy and a young white boy. And so in a sense it was from that moment onwards, age 11, that there was a sensitivity and no more, I wouldn't say any more than that, there was a sensitivity to the existence of racism and the physical dimensions of that, as well as the social dimensions of that. I of course had come from a background where I myself with my parents had escaped Nazi Germany, and so all through my young boyhood I was somehow aware of the fact there was this dimension of anti-Semitism, racism, which applied to me during the war. It wasn't unpleasant but it was there as one of those things that as a child you can't really quite place because you don't know what it's all about. You don't know about the history of it, but you know nevertheless, sort of, what you feel, a bit. So what I'm saying really is that there is a layering perhaps, in my case of that experience on the railway platform with the young black boy and my own experience, and my previous seven years or so in South Africa, having left Nazi Germany. So, that's a rather long and contorted story in relation to your question.

AD: It sounded as if there was something about, or my question might have triggered something of that memory, to do with when you started meeting people in London, members of the ANC, you said it was great to meet people and I wonder.....

PA: Well it was great because here was an adult formulated programmed struggling activity politically which was opposing the very thing that I had identified as a boy and now knew as an adult to be deeply unjust. So it was good to be in some sense, at least socially, engaged with that process, becoming aware of that activity. And there are figures there who had wonderful minds who were working really hard, had been imprisoned, knew the scene and were struggling as a means of actually bringing apartheid to an end 6000 miles away from where they lived in London. So for me this was a very, very welcome new dimension to my life.

AD: And how did you actually become involved yourself?

PA: I said to Harold on one of these occasions, when we had a moment together "Look, is there any way in which you think that I might, as a practising architect with some experience, and of some repute in society in Britain, make a contribution towards the struggle, make a contribution to the ANC through my work?" So he said "Leave it with me", which I did of course. And nothing happened for a while and eventually he came back and he basically said the best thing was not directly with the ANC but why not through the AAM. And if you're interested we could connect you with people there from which you might like to explore that condition, so that was really the basis of it. By that time I had known people like, as I said, the Wolpes, Rusty and Hilda Bernstein, Denis Goldberg, Joe Slovo and others, so these were all figures who were, each in their way, giants in the struggle against apartheid. So I had the extraordinary good fortune to, from time to time, the Wolpes were close friends, others less so, but still [inaudible], and so there was a sense in which I would have wanted to have found a way of belonging more to that activity. And that was really what was behind my question to Harold.

AD: And what would the atmosphere be like when you and all these characters came together for these dinners?

PA: Oh just ordinary human beings around a table with good food and nice wine. There was no sense of there being any involvement in the ANC's activities. On the contrary, these were very much social occasions. I was very aware of Joe Slovo's position in the ANC, I was very aware that Joe had this other activity in his life. But when we happened to meet around a table, usually at the Wolpes, or at other parties, there was no sense of that being brought into the social condition. So these were ordinary nice occasions.

AD: And then once you were put in contact with the anti-apartheid movement, how did things develop from there?

PA: Can't quite remember what the first contact was but I think there was a meeting of what had then been formed as UK Architects Against Apartheid, UKAAA, and there was a meeting which, in speaking to Glen Robinson yesterday, reviewing the various activities that in those early days took place between us, he mentioned the meeting in Friends House and he mentioned that I had spoken. I'd quite forgotten although that triggered a memory, so there must have been an occasion or two when we got together where it seemed to click and it seemed that there was an opportunity for us to work together. I was, as a result of that, asked, my name had been in the papers quite a lot just before that period, I only mention that because it might I think have been significant for them, that is the core group of UKAAA, to have the opportunity of having somebody who might, in a sense, better put in touch the work that was to come with that group with the architectural community at large. And that because of my involvement in the world of architecture and the architectural fraternity, between architects whose name was also in and around, there was an opportunity to spread the work of the AAM if I was able to address those questions as the Chair of that group. So that was kind of put to me and at the time I had also just been appointed the Professor of Architecture at the Bartlett School of Architecture at UCL. And I well remember, after I agreed that I would like to go forward on that basis with the group, and that we would explore what needed to be done, what issues we would address in doing that, I remember a meeting where Mendi Msimeng, who was then the Chief Representative of the ANC, and I guess wanted to meet me. And I'm sure was also a person who for instance Harold Wolpe would have been in touch with at the time, so there had obviously been some discussion perhaps between these figures. And I remember after hours we arranged a meeting in my office at the Bartlett, and these wonderful figures all turning up, security guards for Mendi because at that time the ANC was in quite a vulnerable position and later their offices were bombed in Islington. And they arrived and we met in my office and I remember the occasion very clearly as being one that was going to actually produce a new dimension in my life, it seemed to me. At the same time they were obviously also taking a hard look at me! Seeing who I was, what I was about, what my attitudes were, how I behaved and all these things. And so as a result of that meeting we went forward and began to meet as a group to establish the issues that we wanted to try to focus on, campaign on.

AD: And what did you decide those issues were going to be?

PA: We didn't decide too much initially. What I think I felt and Glen Robinson is the other figure... I was asked to Chair the group and Glen was the Vice Chair. We as architects were all I think, there was a sense of this being a very informal and yet really serious issue. But the language of our meetings was not formal and therefore I think things grew rather than being decided by agendas. There was I think we all felt and I certainly did, a need to raise public consciousness of the work of the AAM, and in particular the anti-apartheid movement's, our group's work, that is UK Architects Against Apartheid. And so with that in mind the campaign ideas grew in a way that would actually help to promote that consciousness at large. And we looked at a number of issues during the period, for instance, the cultural and academic boycott, to see what we could actually address there. So there were issues there that were very successful, there were issues where we wanted to make contact with the Royal Institute of British Architects, with the Council and with President and

with the Secretary, I suppose in today's parlance he might have been regarded as the CEO, the administrative head of the RIBA, Bill Rogers, who was a politician, an ex-Labour, one of the three who with Shirley Williams and David Owen, had all left the Labour party some time in the 1970s perhaps, might even have been early 1980s perhaps. And so there was kind of idea of making contact at the top level of the RIBA with the President in order to address a number of issues. Issues such as a de-recognition of the Institute of South African Architects, to get them de-recognised through the RIBA, with the International Union of Architects, the IUA. And that was one of the issues we addressed, which was done. Another was to, for instance, there were international, the RIBA, I think once a year, had student competitions which were international, where a subject was set, and architects across the world could enter those competitions, and so we addressed the need to actually de-recognise the National Union of South African Architectural Students, that's probably not the right title but something to like that. To put an embargo on that so that they may not enter because of the cultural and academic boycott. And that too was accepted by the RIBA, with great dismay in certain quarters, I mean there was lot of opposition to some of the things we were saying, but we had come through the members of the Council we had been invited, remarkably, by the President to attend an RIBA Council meeting which I'd never been to in my life. And Mendi Msimeng was the Chief Rep of the ANC that I mentioned was also invited to attend. And we came there, he again with one or two body guards lurking around in the hallway outside, and we entered the Chamber and were invited to put our case, our anti-apartheid case to architects who were there to decide about the business of architecture not the business of politics. So what we were really trying to do was to make connections between our view of what might be done to give much greater prominence to the anti-apartheid movement's struggle through the professions and in particular through this profession which I was keen to represent with our Committee.

AD: And what had it been like getting other architects interested and involved?

PA: Again, that happened pretty well. We ended up I think with about 200 or slightly more than 200 architectural practices becoming members of UKAAA and paying their fees so that we could do our campaigning work. And so it was going very well. I think it was partly because I was able from my position as an architect to make contact with prominent architects in the field and in doing that we were able, sort of on the grapevine, to get the position advertised that something was going on which perhaps was of interest and was relevant to the politics of Britain in relation to the politics of South Africa at that time. So those connections were being made by these means. We for instance had, we suggested and it was accepted with pleasure, Richard Rogers and his office at the time in Hammersmith invited us to have a meeting in his office after hours. So we all came and there was a meeting of our group, it was all being publicised and so there was a large gathering of architects in Rogers office to talk about architecture at large but also the particular dimension relating to the anti-apartheid movement. And then again Edward Cullinan, a close friend, he too, we suggested that he too might invite us to an after-hours meeting in his office which we did. So there were those kind of activities which were people-related, directly related to people that we knew, that perhaps I knew in particular, that made it possible to elevate the campaign issues that we were addressing to a level which we thought was necessary in order to make some noise. We had to make noise, we had to actually be seen. The matters had to go up on the agendas. We also for instance did research into companies who were involved in the construction industry, either manufacturing elements – doors, windows, lifts or whatever, but manufacturing companies in the field of building and construction who were active in South Africa under the apartheid regime. British companies out there doing their business, and really what we were trying to do was to indicate those who were so involved and those who had chosen not to. Those companies who had chosen not to enter South Africa with their product on that basis. So with those kinds of issues we were able to, again, circulate those issues amongst all the 200

practices that were paid-up members of the group. Those things began to pile one upon the other and form a kind of sense that something was going on.

AD: And what did you think the effect was of that kind of campaign?

PA: Difficult to say. Good publicity. We ran a competition, we suggested a competition, we ran a competition with an architectural magazine called Building Design, which is a weekly architectural paper. Which was active then and is still active now. I knew the editor Paul Finch and we had thought as our steering group that a competition, open internationally, we thought mainly this might attract students but maybe others too. A competition suggesting Trafalgar Square, where there's another Nelson up on high, opposite South Africa House, where Nelson Mandela was not, where we thought the ANC Freedom Charter should be celebrated for the purposes of the competition. So that Trafalgar Square would become the Freedom Charter Square for the purpose of the competition. And architects were invited to come forward with ideas about that and did. So there were issues of that sort that got into the press. And I think all I can say is that I think there was a consciousness that was raised to a level that it hadn't been a few years before. Then of course we came to...this was in the period from 1987 through to 1993. A five or six year period where these activities and there were several others that I haven't talked about because I've forgotten, but in 1993 which there was I think was called the first international ANC conference, held in Johannesburg in South Africa. With delegates from all over the world attending, invited to attend and I, with Glen, attended that conference. And we went to represent UKAAA. We were not asked to present a paper but we certainly attended workshops which dealt with architecture and in particular, I mean the conference for me was a mind-blowing success. It was just, difficult to describe without breaking into tears, what my feelings were on arriving back in South Africa under conditions where you knew that life was going to change. And that here we were going to a conference which was going to be part of that change. And where that change was actually being made almost tangible and certainly visible in the process of the 2 or 3 or 4 day conference that took place. So there was an extraordinary feeling of well-being and hope and aspiration and bloody-minded strength to get through the politics of the next stage.

AD: And is there any particular image or memory from that time that stands out for you?

PA: In addition to, there was a workshop which I attended daily. There was a not directly related, in the sense that it wasn't on the agenda for the conference but nevertheless became very powerfully part of my agenda. And in due course has been an ongoing project which Glen and I have been working on ever since. You know we've all heard a lot in the last few days an particularly perhaps today about Martin Luther King, the 50th anniversary, his remarkable speech, that orator that wonderful man. And when hearing that I also think well of course that was way back in 1963, so one also thinks about things that he raised about racism. The fundamental things that he raised in his speech about a time ahead when racism wasn't the criterion by which you judge humanity. And I mention that only because that enables one to pause and think well where are we now, 50 years later? That was his dream then, life has in some respects moved on. We no longer have apartheid, the States have moved on, where however are we with racism? And I say that because I think those sorts of moments in time and in history take a long time to be seen in the context of what happens in the future. And I'm saying all of that because that conference in 1993 was for the beginning of a moment which still goes on now. And so what happened was this. The conference was in an out of town conference centre, let's say 10 miles out of town. And every morning the conference delegates who were living in, many of them from all over the world, living in a downtown hotel which was packed with delegates from all over the world. And every morning we had the opportunity of being bussed out to the conference centre and at the end of the day, bussed back to the downtown hotel. Being bussed out and back in the first day or two triggered a childhood memory for me of the opposite condition. The memory was one of blacks bussing themselves in and out of the townships into central white

Johannesburg where the employment lay and where they had to come every day to be there at an early hour and go back every evening at a late hour to be with their families if they could. And all that was part of their lives. So that bussing image suddenly invaded my mind. And that caused me to think what if anything could I do in the future that could make a contribution of a different order perhaps. And it came to me that because of all the moving from a position that could have been but wasn't actually the township but was in distance similar to the relationship between the black townships that were set up by the apartheid government, the apartheid regime, in relation to the white dominated city centre of Johannesburg, and that pattern exists throughout South Africa in many cities and towns. So that kind of bussing, that sense of passing from one place to another, if you transfigure that into the kind of actual township and its relation to the white you get the pattern of polarities. And I started thinking then about how in the times ahead, said with hope in my mind, in the times ahead when apartheid had been left behind, dissolved, thrown out, what might the legacy be that apartheid has left with these black places, the townships and the white dominated, white-centred, economic power places of the whites, 10 miles let us say apart. Sufficiently apart to be sanitised from the white's point of view and yet close enough to enable cheap labour to be used on a daily basis. That's the pattern, that is still the pattern. And so out of that grew the idea of making a study about that condition, and at some point in time trying to raise that at a high level in the South African government. So that a study was made of that legacy condition in order to ask the question "what can be done about this?" What should we be doing about it, it's the legacy, it's there still, it's all over the country and taking the most positive attitude one can to it, is there a way of addressing this by analysis, by discussion, by involvement with all the academic forces that are needed to examine that condition. And come to in the end a way of viewing this which could be said to be a policy to what had been left, what existed and what had been left. So in response to your question was there a moment, or were there moments? This was one of such moments. While the idea was very fresh in my mind travelling out the following morning sitting next to Denis Goldberg who was a wonderful figure who lives on the outskirts of Cape Town now, and is still on the BBC occasionally, commenting on what's going on. And I was sitting next to Denis and said "Well Denis I've had this idea and it's something like this..." and he listened and we rumbled along in the bus and I said "Well I don't quite know what to do with it" and he just turned to me and said "For God's sake do it!" And so I've been trying to do that for a while. And there's a sort of addendum to that little story, which is that when the new government came into power in 1994, I knew that Joe Slovo had been made Minister of Housing. And so I wanted to ring Joe and talk to him, first of all just to say hello and congratulations and wonderful. But also just to say "Look, I've had this idea Joe, can I come and see you about it some time?" It took ages to get hold of him on the phone because civil servants are very good, particularly at that time I imagine when there was a changeover from a white regime to a black regime. Civil servants are very good at protecting the ministers and so I came on the line and said "Look I'm a friend and I want to talk to Joe Slovo". It didn't work quite so quickly! But eventually we talked and had a wonderful conversation and I said all this to Joe. And he said "Look I've got, I can't tell you how many houses we've got to build how much sanitation I've got to bring to the townships, how much infrastructure there is to make improvements, radical and substantial and fundamental improvements to peoples' lives. I just can't do that. But the idea sounds very interesting." And I said "Well shall we meet in a year's time?" and he said "Yes, come on out, we'll talk about it." He died... So we never got to talk about it again. He died of cancer, that wonderful guy. So you can see that for me this project has immense meaning and importance. It's like, I've been trying with Glen, with Glen's full, strong co-operation ever since to bring this idea before successive white commissioners here and ministers in South Africa, and we haven't quite got there yet.

AD: It's obviously something you still feel very passionately about.

PA: Well you know I'm 80 years of age now. I feel as passionately as you can see from the near tears. I feel as passionately about it now as I did then. But I am 6000 miles away, I'm

80 years of age, I'm not in touch with the day to day politics of South Africa. But we're in there, trying to make it work, yes.

There were wonderful moments post-1994 when Mendi Msimeng, who had been Chief Rep at South Africa House with the territory of the enemy at that time, he may not have put it that way but that's how I see it, South Africa House must have been the territory of the enemy-like opposition, the nationalist government. And then post-1994 he became the first ANC High Commissioner who took office in South Africa House. And so we went to talk to him about this idea. And the idea, we had several wonderful times in his office, wonderful cups of tea overlooking Trafalgar Square, when we talked about these ideas and he listened and tried to see whether he could bring something to that idea from his post. And so we made several journeys out there, attended workshops. There had been a long, long story, this was all way back in the mid-nineties, almost 20 years on, we're still not there yet. But we're slowly perhaps going to get there.

AD: You mentioned the legacy of apartheid and I wonder what you think about the legacy of the anti-apartheid movement?

PA: I'm not quite sure what I can say about that except since the time when the anti-apartheid movement was dissolved, I've not been so much in touch with what's come since then. I know through Glen, who's a member of the ANC, of activities. I hear of the work that he did at a school in North London as a commemoration of Oliver Tambo and his life while he was in London. We met several times on several occasions. Mike Terry, who was the General Secretary of the AAM, that great figure of a man. So those were the only occasions, plus odd occasions at South Africa House over the last 18 years or so where I've occasionally attended events, been to conferences, helped conduct a workshop at Westminster Conference Hall. Lindiwe Mabuza who was the second High Commissioner, she was the second after Mendi went back to South Africa, and again we had wonderful times with Lindiwe trying to put to her where we'd got to after Mendi's period in office, and now what could she do. So we could in a sense try to re-elevate these ideas. And through her, Glen and I were very close to an appointment with the former Deputy President in Thabo Mbeki's time as President. And we were about to go out there, we were just waiting for a date in the diary to go and see her to talk about these ideas. I had once spoken here at a conference that was held at a workshop, or seminar that was held at the RIBA, about something else I haven't spoken about yet, where I had said that I thought, I had spoken about these ideas of post-apartheid cities, and that I thought it necessary to elevate these ideas to a level, a stratum where major decision-making would be possible in South Africa. And I said that I was very keen to put these ideas to the President, or Deputy. So it was through Lindiwe that we came very close to getting out there and putting this to her. She's very recently, I've got her name but it's not in my head, been appointed as Executive Director of UN Women. So she flies high still. We never got to see her because, these things happen, Thabo Mbeki resigned, and not long after I think his Deputy did so as well. And so unfortunately we were about to go out and see her and never quite made it! And I've tried again and nearly got to see the Minister for Human Settlement, my last trip out there, Tokyo Sexwale was the Minister of Human Settlement, and again presented these ideas out there to his...close advisors, personal advisors. We had a wonderful session where the ideas struck a chord. But we never quite got to see him, and he's been otherwise preoccupied and he's no longer the Minister, so we're now looking at other funding, ways of securing funding for the ideas, because what we need is funding. So that we can...all of this, to go back to the point I was making about Martin Luther King, the 50 year period for which the celebrations today, enable one to think what have we not yet done? In relation to the ideas, in relation to his dream. Of recognition that even in my short, small life time there are major things which remain undone, and may well do so forever, who knows!

AD: And what advice would you give to any future campaigners for social justice or against racism?

PA: Gosh I don't think I can give advice on that. It depends on the issues because there are so many issues. You know the major ones of poverty, employment, work. I mean I'm just an architect you know, I'm an architect who happens to think with Glen and others that how we make cities and how we address what cities have become, in this instance the townships formed, constructed by the regime, the apartheid regime, the nationalist government. What we make of that, what we make of our cities, what we, all of us, increasingly in our urban lives where the move to urban life is greater and greater and greater, and greater and greater concentrations of human beings across the globe live in urban conditions rather than rural. And cities are where we live, one way or another, they speak to us about who we are in relation to who we have been. Therefore it seems to me to be particularly significant that where you have a legacy of the kind this government and the previous ANC governments have inherited from the nationalist government, that one needs to have conversations about what we find and what we might do about it. And I can talk about what one might advise in those fields but I can't begin to talk about advice in other fields, you know the field of psychotherapy in South Africa for instance is completely another world to me, and so I couldn't begin to address that.

AD: I suppose, coming towards the end, are there any things that you've not talked about that you'd like to tell me about?

PA: No, except that what was particularly significant I think for me, and I hope to some extent, for the Steering Committee members of the UKAAA, was the extraordinary togetherness and energy and commitment that there was in our meetings over a period of seven years or so, eight years perhaps. To me, you know we were all fully employed, we all had businesses. We were either employed or were employers. I was running, helping to run a practice with my partners at the same time as being Professor of Architecture at UCL. So life was busy and that's wonderful. But what I'm saying is that in addition to that there was this other life, this other coming together of fertile, imaginative minds who in relatively short periods of time were able to formulate ideas and bring ideas to the table which enabled us as a group to go on with energy and drive and hard work, because the ideas come, but then what do you do about them, it needs hard work! It needs research sometimes. I've not talked, there are lots of things I haven't talked about, I haven't talked about the fact we had at some point in the period of post-1994 had serious thoughts about alternative ways of addressing architectural education in South Africa. And given the campuses that exist for Universities, which are wonderful, well-ordered, beautifully landscaped spacious places. Compare those with the townships that exist, and you don't need much imagination to do that. And think how could one make alternative foundation courses which could be ways of encouraging black students who would otherwise not be able to find their way into education. So there was a whole story about that which I haven't had the time or at least we've run out of time, steam and time perhaps, to cover adequately. But there is a wonderful story about looking into that at the University of Fort Hare which was the black University, and then looking at it in relation to a study which we at UKAAA commissioned and was researched in Johannesburg about the possibility of setting up an alternative School of Architecture. And that work was done in South Africa by a South African architect, a woman called Karen Smuts. So there were all those dimensions which are really as much part of architecture as the business of making designs and building. Because architecture education, as in all fields I imagine, is really what it's about. Because it is in the architectural education process that the ferment if ideas is able to find a place to grow. It is therefore at Universities and schools of architecture as part of Universities or not, that it seemed to us that there were opportunities in South Africa which should be examined. You know, it's a discipline like any other professional discipline, therefore finally degrees and how you come to that is all very significant and very well-modulated. However, how will one find ways of so making

foundation courses as part of University structure, in a place which isn't quite normal University campus, which would be easier to find ways into, for people who are not accustomed to a middle class entry into University? So there were all those kinds of dimensions to our work as well. I'm sorry, I'm going on too much.

AD: No, no, it's fine, it made me think, I mean you've talked a lot about the kind of structural things that came out of the work you were doing, and I wonder, it also sounded an intensely personal experience, I wonder what you personally got out of your involvement?

PA: Gosh, you know like any activity, if it's with other people which in architecture it always is, by definition architecture is a hugely wide group activity. Therefore the work of this group of politically motivated people was in one sense no different. There was the tradition of working with people, therefore in that work in process, it is like teaching, you always grow, and you probably grow more than the people that you're trying to teach. Because in a sense there's always more to be gained than you could possibly give. So one's left with that as a kind of wonderful experience really. But there's more work to be done out there!